

Metzler, Gertrude Elizabeth  
Where the river flows

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# Where The River Flows



# Where The River Flows

Gertrud Elisabeth Metzler

Affectionately dedicated  
to those  
who have faith in me

*Gertrud Elisabeth Meyer*

PS

8525

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141 Bridge Wapane

Since you were so kind  
in helping me with  
this booklet, I thought  
I'd like you to have one.

If I was supposed to have  
a blue cover of corded  
cardboard with gold  
capitals - but this is what  
they sent me.

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to-day—  
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to dance.  
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to-day—  
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to dance.  
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A happy holiday  
to you and Mrs. Elson  
at this joyous season.

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Gertrud Elisabeth Metzger

To you.

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## *Summer's Passing*

The Wind eloped with Summer to-day—  
It came gently, from out the unknown,  
Dry and crisp, clean smelling.  
It greeted great trees,  
And branches and leaves began to dance.  
It made rivers ripple with laughter.  
Tall friendly rushes  
Along their banks  
Curtsied;  
Shrubs and grasses swayed  
In happy welcome.  
As it blew nearer  
It gathered strength:  
Nature's dancing became wilder.  
Trees grasped their swirling skirts  
And tangoed  
To a grand symphony  
Of water, land and air,—  
Majestic, limitless,—  
The rhythm of the seasons.  
Then the climax broke:  
The blue sky smiled above.  
Tenderly,  
In its strong arms,  
The Wind grasped Summer  
And carried her away—  
To distant, undiscovered spaces.

## *Growth*

I wish my heart were a lilac bud—  
Then it could quietly open to the sun,  
And bring forth new leaves and new life.  
But my heart is like the turbulent Spring stream—  
Only its walls are stronger than thick ice.  
God give me strength to break through the wall  
Into the sunlight.  
I would rather that my heart should break,—  
Than that it should not know the sun.

## *Day and Night*

Oh! the wind in the trees  
And the lift of his brow,  
As he said, "Good day."  
                    The sun was bright.  
Oh! the wind in the trees  
And the dark of his eye,  
As he paused to say,  
                    "Good Night."

## *Rich Poverty*

She heard them prattle in whispers,  
"She lost: poor thing: too bad!"  
Smiling, she mused at her treasures  
With promise so richly clad—  
Of which they were blindly unaware—  
Thinking she should be sad:  
But she did not tell them, "One cannot lose  
What one has never had."

## *Morning*

When Lilacs wake with early dew,  
Ere great wild bees the honey sip  
From tiny blossom's purple lip,  
Their fragrance—innocently fair—  
Sways as they cluster morning air,—  
Unconscious perfume, Springlike, new.

## *High Noon*

Diamonds dance on the rippling river.  
It's high noon  
And the sky is blue!  
Diamonds gleam, as it flows superbly  
In the March sun,  
With a crystal hue;  
Diamonds flash, as snowy ice chunks  
Are pushed to the shore  
And crushed up in chips—  
All gray and white in a curving corner—  
As the river turns  
With silent lips.  
Diamonds sparkle with brilliant splendour,  
As it flows on free  
To the great unknown;  
Its tiny ripples with diamonds glitter,  
On water moving  
To a shoreless home.

## *Spring Sky*

Over red roof tops the sky is bright blue  
And the clouds move there—  
White and dove gray.  
The sun can't be seen,  
But it's up there somewhere—  
For the scene has the brightness of day.  
The topmost tree branches  
With warm tawny buds  
Point upward with delicate fingers;  
And the buds, not awake,  
Are just ready to break—  
Basking in the sun's warmth—  
As it lingers  
To gild the white edges  
Of clouds of dove gray,  
Moving silently southward,  
At the close of Spring's day.

## *At Lisabeth's*

It's fun  
to watch  
a garden grow,—  
a bud,  
and then a flower:  
but fabrics grow, too,—  
row on row;  
and if you're free,  
then you can see  
this miracle  
of industry,  
on Lisabeth's loom.

There—  
row on row—  
threads into fabrics  
grow and grow.

## *Waiting Heart*

The river talks with God  
In the Spring,  
At night  
When children slumber.  
I heard it  
As a child at home;  
And now—  
That I am older,  
Each Spring  
My homing heart awaits  
God's answering promise  
To its wordless whispering.

## *Summer Night*

So still the summer night!  
The trees are black lace,  
Patterned on a velvet cloth of blue,  
For a sky table,  
Far above a hill,  
Where the full moon sits—  
Smiling, round and yellow.  
    No stir or movement anywhere!  
    The breezes are asleep:  
    Day's noises all are hushed:  
    Down in a little forest pond  
    The young frogs gather,  
    And sing their evening chorus  
    To their father's deep, bass croak;  
    While crickets tune their instruments  
    For midnite orchestrations,—  
Sweet summer music for the yellow moon.  
The glow worms pause to listen;  
Then turn, and light small lanterns,  
And pass on;—  
    While Summer, in the sky,  
    Hangs great, gray veils of gauze  
    To curtain the night  
    With humid heat.  
And everywhere the full moon shines  
And casts a yellow light:  
He's banqueting, all by himself,  
With memories,  
To-night.



## *Minuet*

I will remember joy in pain,  
When sun warms lilacs after rain;  
When minstrel insects clad in jet  
Make music for a minuet;  
And breezes fragrant with romance,  
And lacey lilacs slowly dance.

## *Night Hawk*

Beyond—in the dark blue  
Summer sky,  
A night hawk flits  
In uneven flight—  
Soars and dips—  
And loudly calls with plaintive note;  
Then swoops with rasping swift  
Upon its insect prey:  
Then up and up and up  
It blinks its white-striped wings  
Like eyelids,  
Into the dark unseen;  
And calls a fainter, wistful cry  
To Stars that do not answer.

## *Evening*

The asphalt curves upward  
Between fields of uncultivated green,  
Toward the west horizon.  
There, silhouetted in the distance,  
Are ugly black factories—  
Crude, angular, cardboard cut-outs,—  
Man-made, small deserted,  
Under the vast blue cosmic vault  
The coral pink and rosy yellow  
That we call sky.

A few purple strips of cloud  
Stretch along above the buildings.  
A gleam of gold from daytime's sun  
Shines on the sky and enlivens the colors;  
They gleam and vibrate in the evening air.  
Peeping above the cloud strips  
Is the Evening Star—  
A tiny fleck of reddish brilliance—  
Sparkling above the fields of green,  
As they stretch slowly  
Into the distance—where the sky awaits them.  
Silently,  
Star joins cloud and field and sky  
In evening adoration—  
Fuller of harmony than word or note—  
A color symphony,  
In loving praise of their Creator.

## Coins

“You can never possess my wealth,”  
Said the sun;  
“You can only look,  
And be dazzled with gold  
When day’s course is run.  
Coins that your eyes took  
From my bowl of gold splendor  
In western skies  
You’ll see everywhere,—  
Colored bright with all rainbow hues,  
Every size,  
In the earth and air.  
In the sky, purple circles will blotch  
Bright blue;  
Large and small you’ll find;  
On the cinder path gray, little red  
Ones will run,  
As you walk behind;  
On bare brown stubbled grain fields,  
Bright saucers green  
Will spin round and play;  
And tiny, rich yellow discs—  
Bordered with orange—  
In green gulleys lay.  
(But the corn and the wheat will be safe  
Inside  
After Harvest Day.)  
When your eyes become rested, they’ll  
All disappear;  
The sky will be blue,  
And the cinder path gray  
And the stubble field brown,  
In their natural hue:  
(But I will be gone with my wealth  
Far away  
And my coins will have blinded you.)”

## *Phantoms Dancing*

The brown puppy stood at the window upstairs,  
And looked out on the frosty moonlit night;  
He pricked up his ears and grew rigidly still,  
And a low snarl disturbed the quiet height.  
Outside on a clothesline, all lifeless and stiff,  
Flapped a flannelette gown, with a futile flapping,  
And below on the snow danced its shadow grotesque,—  
As a child, in her cot upstairs, dreamless, lay napping.

And the night wind's fingers stretched long and thin,  
As hither and thither the gown it tossed,  
With its wooden pegs on a bit of a string  
Attached to black wheels, like a sad soul lost,—  
A headless phantom, no hands, no feet,  
Nor eyes, ears, nor mouth, to cope with the demon,  
That maliciously laughed as the flannelette flapped,—  
All frigid with frost in its futile flapping,—  
And the shadow below, patterned gray on the snow,  
Mocked silent, macabre,—in its deathly dancing.

The puppy's loud barking disturbed the child's slumber,  
Upstairs, in her cot, she roused from her sleep.  
"Why are you barking, my Joey?" she questioned.  
"There's nothing out there," and she rose to peep.  
But the dog snarled and bristled and then barked shrill,  
And stood on guard at the window sill.

And the child returned to her tranquil slumber;  
While outside in the night, on string and snow,  
The flannelette cracked and the shadow danced  
To a silent tune and a wordless spell,  
And the will of the fickle mocking wind,—  
With its long fingers clutched in the frosty air  
At the phantom puppets,—flapping, dancing.

## *Blind Crossing*

Nothing but grayness everywhere,—  
Grayness and green, —  
And in the tall grass,  
Wild strawberries,  
Full of white blossoms.

A little green gulley  
By the side of the road,—  
Its sloping banks  
Thick with tall grasses,  
Beneath a gray sky  
Of evening.

Lumbering slowly  
Over white bloom  
At the top of the gulley,  
A huge, gray turtle  
Awkwardly moving  
Down to the bottom,—  
Its four gray legs  
Crawling clumsily.  
Resting a moment there  
In its gray shell—  
Oblivious.

Lumbering slowly  
Over white blossoms  
Up to the top  
Of the other bank,  
Tall with green grasses:  
High on the top now—  
Resting again,  
Drawing head,  
Legs and tail  
Within its round shell,—  
A dull, gray mass.

*Blind Crossing (Continued)*

Nothing but grayness everywhere—  
Grayness and green,—  
And in the tall grass,  
Wild strawberries,  
Full of white blossoms.

*Tears*

“Not mine,” I pray, “but Thine,  
O Lord;  
I have no fears;  
But please, God, grant  
To me,  
In grief,  
The sweet release  
Of tears.”

*The Mower*

Only the sound of a mower  
On grass  
Breaks the silence  
Of the little English churchyard,  
To say:  
“There is no death.”

*Always*

“They say I lost,”  
Said the little gray tombstone;  
“But ah! they cannot see  
That mine  
I will have always—  
Through eternity.”

## *Christmas Tree*

“Where did you come from, Christmas tree?  
You stand so tall and strong,  
In the little park by the river dark,  
As it runs along.”

“Far in a Druid forest old  
Oh—thousands of years ago—  
Where wee creatures wild,  
Timid, furred and mild,  
And their young ones grow.

Man came and cut me from my roots  
And put me in this park;  
And he decked me bright  
With glass bulbs that light  
When the world is dark.

“I don’t mind being lonely now,  
For in the midnight clear,  
Furred folk from the wild  
Brought the small Christ Child:  
And He has blessed me here.”

## *Winter Buds*

The colored leaves are down,  
Raindrops are gently falling;  
Bare trees make a lonely pattern  
Against the sky.  
But high upon a branch of gray  
Securely clustered, red buds sway  
In Winter's sanctuary free—  
Small censors of mute melody—  
To and fro swinging with a rocking rhythm,  
Humming Spring's lullaby.







PS Metzler, Gertrude  
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